Mechanism sought to enforce Balochistan PA's resolutions

• Women Parliamentary Caucus highlights widespread indifference to public welfare • Speaker clarifies resolutions are recommendations and government may choose whether to act upon it or not

By Saleem Shahid

QUETTA: The Balochistan Assembly has adopted a resolution calling for the creation of a mechanism to monitor and ensure the implementation of resolutions passed by the provincial assembly on various public issues.

ANP MPA Salma Kakar, on behalf of Women Parliamentary Caucus members Deputy Speaker Ghazala Golla, Shahida Rauf, Farah Azeem Shah, and Safia, moved the joint resolution. It stated that while the Balochistan Assembly regularly approves numerous public welfare resolutions and forwards them to the government for action, effective implementation remains almost nonexistent.

The House therefore recommended that the provincial government establish a monitoring mechanism to track the progress of assembly-approved resolutions across all departments and identify and remove obstacles to their implementation.

Speaking on the resolution, MPAs Shahida Rauf and Shehnaz Umarani said that assembly resolutions are not being implemented, which is why women members have proposed forming a committee to review progress. They emphasised that follow-up is needed not only on women-related matters but on all resolutions.

The speaker read out relevant rules, clarifying that a resolution is a recommendation and the government may choose whether to act upon it. Provincial Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani said that the matter would be discussed with the Law and Parliamentary Affairs Department and the chief minister would be briefed. He also suggested that forming an in-house committee would be a positive step.

MPAs Farah Azeem Shah and Asghar Ali Tareen supported the resolution, stating that they represent the voice of the people and should not be ignored. The speaker noted that resolutions pass through various stages and reach the Chief Secretary, who issues necessary directives, but implementation ultimately depends on the government.

The House also passed another resolution calling for a strict ban on industrial trans fats and partially hydrogenated oils (PHOs) across the province.

Deputy Speaker Ghazala Golla, along with Women Parliamentary Caucus members Shahida Rauf, Farah Azeem Shah, Salma Bibi and Umm Kulsoom, jointly moved the resolution, highlighting that industrially produced trans fatty acids and PHOs are major contributors to heart disease, diabetes, stroke and other non-communicable diseases. They noted that consumers are often unaware of the presence of these harmful substances in packaged and processed foods.

QUETTA: Returning officer examines the nomination papers of candidates participating in local government elections.—PPI

Yasmin gets bail in May 9 case

By Wajih Ahmad Sheikh

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Saturday granted post-arrest bail to incarcerated PTI Punjab President Dr Yasmin Rashid in a case of burning police vehicles near Mughalpura during the May 9, 2023 riots.

ATC-I Judge Manzer Ali Gill heard the bail petition during a hearing held at Kot Lakhpat jail.

Barrister Taimur Malik argued on behalf of the petitioner and referred to the rule of consistency applied to other accused people, including PTI founder Imran Khan, former senator Ejaz Chaudhry and former governor Umar Sarfraz Cheema by the courts granting bail to them in similar cases.

The judge approved the bail for Dr Rashid in the case, subject to furnishing surety bonds worth Rs100,000.

However, he adjourned the hearing of the PTI leader's bail petitions in three other cases till Nov 25.

In a statement, Barrister Malik said his client should be granted bail in the remaining cases as well on the same legal principle.

He added that later if the high court accepted her suspension applications, she could be released pending the outcome of her appeals against the convictions. The PTI Punjab president has already been convicted in four other May 9 cases including an attack on the Shadman police station.

Statements recorded

An anti-terrorism court also recorded the statements of 10 police personnel in a case related to violence at GOR-I neighbourhood during the May 9 riots.

The prosecution presented the police officials as its witnesses. A prosecutor told the court that 57 witnesses had testified in the case so far. The court summoned more prosecution witnesses on Nov 25. The Race Course police had registered the case against PTI leaders and workers on charges of attacking the main gate of GOR-I Club Chowk and damaging property.

Two Hub officers suspended

By Our Staff Correspondent

QUETTA: The Balochistan government has suspended Hub deputy commissioner and additional deputy commissioner for 90 days with an immediate effect on the allegation of issuing illegal domicile certificates to non-residents.

Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan earlier ordered a probe into the scandal through a high-powered fact-finding mission after receiving information about the issuance of domicile certificates to non-local people. On the basis of the inquiry report, which confirmed the allegations, the chief secretary ordered the suspension of DC Nisar Ahmed Langove and Additional DC (General) Ali Raza Khoso under Section 6 of the Balochistan Employees (Discipline and Appeal) Act 2011, officials said.

The officers were accused of issuing over 200 domicile certificates to non-local individuals without obtaining the required signatures of the local committee. The inquiry report stated that out of 422 local certificates, 113 were found to be fake or illegal, while 309 out of 409 domicile certificates were also deemed illegal. Most of the fraudulent certificates were reportedly issued to individuals from Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and other districts of Balochistan.

Officials said that the chief secretary had constituted the fact-finding committee after receiving an application from the civil society regarding the verification process of domicile certificates issued by the deputy commissioner and additional deputy commissioner during the years 2024 and 2025.

The high-powered fact-finding committee comprised Bashir Ahmed Bangulzai (BCS/BS-20), Member-II, Board of Revenue Balochistan; Abdul Salam Achakzai (BCS/BS-19), Special Secretary (Schools) of Education Department; and Rehmat-Ullah Changezai (BSS/BS-19) of P&D Department.

The committee submitted its report to the chief secretary concerning the local and domicile certificates issued by the two officers of Hub district.

However, before the suspension of the two officers, some suspected domicile holders obtained a stay order from the Balochistan High Court.

Members of civil society said that if the domicile certificates were genuine, there would have been no need for such urgency in seeking a stay order from the court.

Govt lifts ban on gold trade after industry outcry

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Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) President Atif Ikram Sheikh had called for the immediate restoration of SRO 760 to protect the jewellery export industry.

In October, the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) approved the continuation of the existing framework for precious metals and jewellery trade, with enhanced transparency and automation measures to improve efficiency and traceability in the import and export regime.

Amendments to 2013 rules

Separately, the Ministry of Commerce has made a series of amendments to SRO 760, originally titled 'Import and Export of Precious Metals, Jewellery and Gemstones Order 2013'.

The order has been renamed 'Import and Export of Precious Metals and Jewellery Order 2013'. The definition of "jewellery passbook", issued by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), has been expanded under Clause 2(j) to include both paper and digital versions.

The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan monitors the import of gold and export of jewellery, with all transactions recorded in the jewellery passbook and authenticated by the authority.

The scope of trade allowed under Clause 3(2) has also been clarified. It now specifies that the regime covers "the import of precious metals and gemstones and export of jewellery", instead of "the import or export of precious metals, gemstones and jewellery".

Regarding customs stations where imports and exports are allowed under Clause 3(9), the government has introduced a procedure for operational issues, stating: "In the event of operational constraints, a no-objection certificate shall be required from the respective additional or deputy collector of customs to allow one-time change of customs stations."

On imports permitted under the entrustment scheme, the second proviso to "import" under Clause 4(2) has been amended to recognise contracts apostilled under the Apostille Convention, 1961.

The revised provision states: "TDAP shall ensure that the contract signed by the supplier is notarised from the relevant foreign country's legal authorities, duly attested by the relevant Pakistan Missions abroad or apostilled under the Apostille Convention, 1961, where applicable. The contract shall contain inter alia all information as prescribed in Annex-D."

Lastly, a new paragraph (iii) has been inserted under the "export proceeds" heading in Clause 4(2): "All the transactions under the entrustment scheme shall be processed exclusively through the same bank, i.e. export of jewellery from the same bank that processed or handled the corresponding import of precious metals."

Joint Bannu operation leaves eight terrorists dead: ISPR

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recovered from the Indian-sponsored khwarij, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against the security forces, law enforcement agencies and targeted killing of innocent civilians.

The ISPR statement added that sanitisation operation was being conducted to eliminate any other Indian-sponsored terrorist found in the area, as the relentless counterterrorism campaign under "Azm-i-Istehkam" vision (as approved by the Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by security forces and law enforcement agencies of Pakistan would continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country.

Also, police foiled a bid to blow up a bridge with explosives in Bannu district on Saturday.

A police official said that terrorists had planted an improvised explosive device weighing 10kg beneath the bridge near the Abshar Chowk to damage the infrastructure. "After receiving information about the subversive attempt, the local police authorities dispatched experts of the bomb disposal squad to defuse the IED," he maintained.

The police official said that in the Havaid area, a joint action by police and members of peace committees forced the militants to flee the area. The official said that another terrorist was eliminated in a joint operation by police, CTD personnel and volunteers of the peace body in the Nasarkhel area of Lakki Marwat district.

Inspector General of Police, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Zulfiqar Hameed and Regional Police Officer Sajjad Khan felicitated the law enforcers on the successful operation against terrorists in the region.

They reaffirmed that the entire region would be cleansed of the menace and the police would eliminate all terrorists with full force.

Opp demands probe

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been weakened due to this. He said that it was unfortunate that the judges would be transferred without their consent. Mr Jhagra claimed that the weak judicial system was the major hurdle in foreign investments, as no one can trust the justice system in Pakistan.

He said that it was unfortunate that the Supreme Court was no longer supreme, as there was a court above it. He claimed the judges would be transferred to Balochistan, Gilgit Baltistan, or even Kashmir if they refused to follow instructions.

He said the IMF has demanded transparency, which means that no public servant can get lifetime immunity. He also demanded that accountability should be across the board and no one should be above the law.

Mr Jhagra also said that the process of privatisation, which was started during the tenure of PTI, could not be completed. He also criticised the IMF, saying that the financial body did not look into the conduct of the Election Commission of Pakistan, which allegedly converted 17 seats into 180.

The IMF report, publication of which is a precondition for the IMF executive board's approval of a $1.2 billion disbursement next month, estimated that Pakistan could boost economic growth by about 5 to 6.5 per cent over five years if it implements a package of governance reforms beginning within the next three to six months.

It also sought an end to special treatment for a few influential public sector entities in direct government contracts and transparency in the affairs and decision-making of the Special Investment Facilitation Council.

It further recommended tighter limits on the government's financial powers without greater parliamentary oversight and streamlining of anti-corruption agencies.

The government had been delaying the publication of the report since August.

Tight security in place for by-polls

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by safeguarding voters and preserving law and order throughout the polling process.

They have been barred from preventing any eligible voter from entering a polling station, except in cases involving weapons, explosives, prohibited items or attempts to incite violence or threaten national security.

2024 poll results

The NA-18 seat had been won in the 2024 general elections by former opposition leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub Khan, who defeated PML-N's Babar Nawaz by a margin of 80,000 votes. Mr Ayub secured 192,948 votes against 112,316 by Mr Nawaz.

Following Mr Ayub's disqualification, his wife, Shehrnaz Omar Ayub, is now contesting the seat and will face Babar Nawaz. She is contesting an election for the first time.

In NA-96, the PML-N has fielded Muhammad Bilal Badar Chaudhry, brother of Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry. In the 2024 general elections, the PML-N's Nawab Sher Waseer lost the seat to PTI-backed Rai Haider Ali. Mr Waseer is again in the run as an independent.

In NA-104, the PML-N has nominated Daniyal Ahmed, who is contesting against three independent candidates. Mr Ahmed previously contested the elections and lost to Sahibzada Hamid Raza, who secured 132,655 votes. Mr Ahmed is the son of Raja Riaz, the former leader of the opposition in the National Assembly.

In NA-129, the seat fell vacant following the death of former Punjab governor and PTI stalwart Mian Muhammad Azhar. His grandson Chaudhry Arsalan is now contesting the by-poll, while the PML-N has fielded Hafiz Mian Muhammad Noman.

Mr Noman was the runner-up in the 2024 elections with 71,546 votes. He was previously elected to the Punjab Assembly in the 2008 elections. His uncle, Mian Usman, was an MNA during 1988-90.

PTI-backed Rai Hasan Nawaz had won from NA-143 in the 2024 general elections. This time, the PML-N has fielded Muhammad Tufail Jutt against independent candidate Zarrar Akbar Choudhary.

In NA-185, PPP's Dost Muhammad Khosa and the PML-N's Mehmood Qadir Khan Laghari are among the key candidates. PTI's Zartaj Gul had won the seat in the 2024 general elections, securing 94,881 votes, more than the combined tally of all other contestants. Mr Laghari and Mr Khosa secured 32,929 and 26,621 votes, respectively.

From PP-73, the PML-N has fielded Mian Sultan Ali Ranjha as its candidate.

In PP-98, the party has nominated Azad Ali Tabbasum, who is contesting against nine independent candidates. The party had not nominated any candidate in this constituency in the 2024 elections, backing instead the Istehkam-i-Pakistan Party (IPP) candidate Muhammad Ajmal, who was runner-up to PTI-backed Junaid Afzal Sahi.

In PP-115, the ruling party's candidate Muhammad Tahir Pervez is facing three independents and an Awami Justice Party Pakistan (AJPP) candidate. Mr Pervez also contested the 2024 polls and remained runner-up to PTI-backed Shahid Javed.

In PP-116, the PML-N has nominated Ahmed Shaharyar, the son-in-law of Senator Rana Sanaullah. He is contesting against five independents and a Pakistan Nazriyati Party (PNP) candidate. In the 2024 polls, Mr Shaharyar was runner-up with 52,517 votes.

In PP-203, the PML-N's Muhammad Hanif Jutt, brother of Muhammad Tufail Jutt, is contesting against independent candidate Falak Sher Dogar.

Imran Gabol in Lahore also contributed to this report

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